



PRESS RELEASE

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COMMUNITY CELEBRATES THE GRAND OPENING OF SR 56

San Diego – Mayor Dick Murphy, local and state officials, and more than 10,000 citizens joined together in a celebration today to mark the long-awaited opening of State Route 56, a new east-west highway that will relieve traffic bottlenecks in northern San Diego.

“This is a huge victory in our fight to relieve traffic congestion,” Mayor Dick Murphy said. “I personally take a great deal of pride in this day. One of the main reasons I created the Freeway Congestion Strike Team was to get this project completed. Now that goal has been accomplished.”

The Mayor, Councilmembers Brian Maienschein and Scott Peters, along with Poway Mayor and SANDAG Chair Mickey Cafagna and Caltrans District Director Pedro Orso-Delgado joined other community leaders at the SR 56 Grand Opening Festival and bike ride on Saturday.

This final section of the four-lane freeway, between Camino del Sur and Carmel Valley Road, will complete the nine-mile stretch between Interstate 5 and Interstate 15. Initially, the new freeway will accommodate 65,000 vehicles per day. That will increase to between 84,000 and 120,000 vehicles per day by the year 2020.

Add1-COMMUNITY CELEBRATES THE GRAND OPENING OF SR 56

“When I began my first term as a councilmember in 2000, one of my top priorities was the completion of SR 56,” said Councilmember Maienschein, co-chair of the Mayor’s Freeway Congestion Strike Team. “I’m so happy to see that all the work we have done on this project has paid off. This is a result of our efforts to make congestion relief a priority for our city.”

“The SR 56 freeway has been a top priority for the families in my district, and I am glad that we were able to get results for them,” Councilmember Peters said. “Residents who have been waiting for decades for this freeway will certainly enjoy the bike ride and festivities that mark an end to this long wait.”

The entire length of State Route 56 cost approximately \$220 million, with \$56 million of that spent on this last section of the freeway. Funding for the project came from city, county, state and SANDAG sources. Developers in the area have also contributed to this project.

"This is an exciting day for our region," said Mayor Cafagna. "Highway 56 is an important piece of our regional transportation plan. It also shows how vital the passage of Prop. A will be in November. For without the contribution of nearly \$90 million of TransNet dollars to the construction of this highway, this day may not have been possible."

Caltrans will open the new stretch of freeway to vehicle traffic on Monday, July 19 at approximately 5 a.m. It will provide a free-flowing route from Rancho Penasquitos all the way to Torrey Pines, reducing traffic on Black Mountain Road, Mira Mesa Boulevard, Miramar Road and Carmel Valley Road. It will also help balance the north-south traffic on I-5 and I-15. Plans call for eventually adding another two lanes.

"Caltrans is proud to participate in the unveiling of this new portion of freeway and recognizes the efforts of all its employees, partner agencies, local elected officials and neighborhood community groups and individuals in making it a reality," said Orso-Delgado of Caltrans.

The following sponsors made the Grand Opening Festival of SR 56 possible:

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